

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the mechanical transformation of a thread that includes the steps of:

providing an apparatus for the mechanical transformation of such thread, the apparatus including two supports;

5        receiving and returning the thread by one of said supports to other of said supports at least three times to sustain the thread by defining a suspended length; [[and]]

providing an abrasive device disposed and acting in correspondence of the suspended length; and

10        using the apparatus for the mechanical transformation of the thread for abrading the thread when the latter thread is supported in the air between [[the]] said two supports, wherein the thread winds up said supports through a set of several passages around said supports.

2. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein the thread is continuously fed between [[the]] said supports while operating [[the]] said abrasion abrading step throughout its development the process.

3. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein are used two cylinders are used for supporting the thread, at least one [[them]] of said two cylinders being slotted with a corresponding number of slots to guide the thread and to keep the distance among the various portions of the passages itself constant.

4. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, said apparatus further including a tension sensor to detect a thread tension, wherein the thread is unwound from a bobbin through by a motor means driving a pull unit to pull the thread, and the tension of the thread as it unwinds is detected in order to drive and control said motor means on the basis of ~~[[the]]~~ a detected tension value to provide a uniform abraded effect on the thread by keeping said thread tension steady during said abraiding step.

5. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 4, wherein said bobbin is supported on a shaft driven by a second motor means and wherein said second motor means ~~[[are]]~~ is driven on the basis of said detected value of the thread's tension.

6. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein ~~the abrasion~~ said abrading step is operated by moving said abrasive ~~[[means]]~~ device closer to the thread, whose position relative to the same thread can be made to vary in relation to ~~[[the]]~~ an orientation and/or distance values.

7. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein ~~the abrasion~~ said abrading step is operated by moving said abrasive ~~[[means]]~~ device closer to the thread ~~which have~~ , said abrasive device having different abrasive capacity.

8. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein ~~the abrasion~~ said abrading step

is operated by moving said abrasive [[means]] device closer to the thread at various times with intervals randomly differentiated from each other.

9. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 2, wherein ~~the abrasion~~ said abrading step is operated with an abrasive means having a substantially cylindrical shape rotating about [[their]] its own [[axes]] axis with a surface speed higher than that for the feeding of the thread.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for the mechanical transformation of a thread, that comprises the apparatus comprising:

a suspending means including a support and another support designed to receive and return the thread to one another at least three times and to be able to sustain the thread by  
5 defining a suspended length[[,]]; and

abrasive means disposed and acting in correspondence of said suspended length, wherein the thread winds up said supports through a set of several passages around said supports.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein [[it]] the apparatus further comprises motor means for unreeling the thread from a bobbin and sensor means for detecting the tension of the thread connected to said motor means .

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said abrasive means consist comprises of one or more brushes.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said abrasive means consist comprises of one or more brushes provided along respective longitudinal axes, said brushes on which ~~[[the]]~~ a set of bristles are disposed on ~~[[more]]~~ staves spaced apart and parallel to ~~[[the]]~~ longitudinal ~~[[axis]]~~ axes of ~~[[the]]~~ said brushes.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ a set of bristles of said brushes are made from abrasive nylon.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ said bristles of said brushes are made from abrasive nylon.

16. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said abrasive means consist comprises of one or more cylinders coated with diamond or emery paper.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said abrasive means are disposed on said supports whose positions relative to the thread can be made to vary in relation to ~~[[the]]~~ an orientation and/or distance values.

18. (Withdrawn) A yarn of vegetable, animal or artificial or synthetic origin, that has portions, along its longitudinal development, subjected to a mechanical abrasive action while the thread is suspended in the air between two supports.

19. (New) An apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

a tension sensor supporting the thread at a location before or after said suspending means to detect a tension of the thread; and

a motor means driving a pull unit to pull the thread unwound from a bobbin, an  
5 operation of said motor means being dependent on said tension to keep said tension steady while driving said pull unit.

20. (New) An apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said bobbin is supported on a shaft driven by another motor means being dependent on said tension.